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Doctor William Procter (1872-1951)

Doctor William Procter, distinguished scientist, died suddenly and unexpectedly in West Palm Beach, Florida, April 19, 1951. Doctor Procter was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on September 8, 1872, the son of Harley Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Sanford Procter. His grandfather founded the Procter and Gamble Company in 1837.

Much of Doctor Procter's boyhood was spent in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts. He graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy in 1891, and from Yale University with the degree of Ph.B. in 1894, having specialized in chemistry and business. Between 1895 and 1897 he took an extended trip around the World, visiting Japan, China, India, and many other countries. He was a graduate student in the Sorbonne (Paris, France) in 1896-1897. For the succeeding twenty years he was engaged in business, chiefly in the field of railroad organization and securities. Later he became actively associated with, and a director of, the Procter and Gamble Company.

In 1917 Doctor Procter gradually relinquished business and began graduate work in zoology at Columbia University, continuing until 1920, but never working toward a higher degree. His interests were chiefly in genetics, embryology and protozoology, he being associated with men such as Wilson, Morgan, Calkins, Huettnner, Sturtevant, and others of the brilliant group then in the Department of Zoology at Columbia. It was this inspiring experience that influenced Doctor Procter to devote the remainder of his life to work in biology.

Ever since he was a boy of about 15, or in the mid-80's, the Procter family had spent nearly every summer on Mount Desert

Island, Maine, chiefly at Bar Harbor. In 1921 Doctor Procter established a research laboratory on the Island, at first in association with others at Salisbury Cove. Various disagreements led to his withdrawal from this association and instituting his own laboratory on his estate at Corfield, on Frenchman's Bay, about a mile north of Bar Harbor. Most of the early work of the laboratory was devoted to a study of the rich marine fauna of the Island, the results being published in a series of volumes mentioned later. Doctor Procter's fine work attracted the staff in biology at the University of Montreal, and in 1936 he was called to Montreal where he passed an examination and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Science. This same year he established "The Biological Survey of the Mount Desert Region, Incorporated."

It was in 1918 that the Boston Society of Natural History (later the New England Society) selected Mount Desert Island for detailed study of the insect fauna, and the curator of the collections, Charles W. Johnson, spent a portion of each summer on the Island until 1926. In that year, Procter and Johnson made elaborate plans for further study, but this was interrupted by Johnson's death in 1932. Doctor Procter then entered upon his work on the insect fauna of the Island with an unflagging interest and vigor. Parts of every year, usually from early May into October, were spent at the home at Corfield, and every part of the Island, including virtually every square foot, was combed for insects. The small station near Salisbury Cove called "Penikese" and the main laboratory at Corfield were the bases where much work was accomplished, by the running of light traps and other methods. As discussed in his publications, Doctor Procter constantly changed his light traps as to position, and color and intensity of the light, and these yielded a vast range of specimens and species.

Of the series of seven volumes, or parts, published in his survey, the first was by the late Charles W. Johnson who worked on the insect fauna of the Island. This was largely responsible for diverting Doctor Procter's interests from the marine to the terrestrial fauna. It is of interest to note that

this first volume on the insects of Mount Desert was dedicated to the late Professor Charles Henry Fernald, founder of the Department of Entomology at the now University of Massachusetts, in 1886, who was born on the Island on March 16, 1838. Parts 2 to 7 of the series were written by Doctor Procter, Parts 2 to 5 relating to the marine fauna, Parts 6 and 7 to the insects.*

In Part 7 of this series, Doctor Procter describes the 421 field stations that he had established and examined between 1927 and June 1945. Following the publication of this concluding volume, the study was continued and the number of field stations was further increased. In 1946, Doctor Procter had amassed records from the Island of no fewer than 349 families, 2,660 genera, and 6,578 species and subspecies of Arthropods, all but 200 of which were insects. Virtually all of these are represented in his personal collection. In this concluding volume on the insects, he dedicates the work as follows: "I have listed alphabetically the many persons who have shown their interest and kindness in giving me help of many kinds. To them I am profoundly grateful and, as mentioned elsewhere, I dedicate this volume to them as a mark of my appreciation." This list includes some 79 names. One name that was omitted inadvertently, since he was of the greatest help in the preparation of the work and is cited hundreds of times throughout the volume, is Doctor A. Edmund Brower, of Augusta, Maine. Doctor Brower was stationed on Mount Desert in the early and mid-30's and cooperated closely with Doctor Procter both in collecting and in identification of the insects, particularly the Lepidoptera, and especially the Micros.

During his life Doctor Procter made many donations and contributions to various causes and to many persons, these never being publicized in any manner. Thus, during the difficult years

* Biological Survey of the Mount Desert Region. Part VI. The Insect Fauna, pp. 1-496, map, 11 figs., portrait of C. W. Johnson; 1938. (Includes 5,465 species and subspecies, Hexapoda and Arachnida.) The Same, Part VII. The Insect Fauna, pp. 1-566, map, 10 figs.; 1946. (Includes 6,578 species and subspecies.)

of the recent war he made substantial contributions to the Entomological Society of America, which enabled the Society to publish their "Annals" of the period with little or no reduction in size. He served on the advisory board of the zoology department of Columbia University, on the board of the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, as a trustee of the American Museum of Natural History, and in several other important capacities. Likewise he was a member of many scientific societies, both in America and abroad. In later years, and chiefly through his personal friendship with Doctor George A. Baitsell, of Yale University, he became very much interested in the Society of the Sigma Xi, contributing generously to its various Grants-in-aid, and particularly to RESA (The Scientific Research Society of America). This culminated in the establishment of the William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement, the first award of which was made to Doctor Karl T. Compton at Cleveland, Ohio, on December 29, 1950.

Doctor Procter remained a bachelor until he was 38, when he married Miss Emily Pearson Bodstein on February 3, 1910. Seldom has there been a couple more devoted and appreciative of the efforts of the other than Doctor and Mrs. Procter. A distinguished musician and French scholar, Mrs. Procter was invalided by arthritis for several years before her death at Bar Harbor on September 25, 1949.

Doctor Procter bequeathed his collection of insects, together with the cabinets, drawers, books and records appertaining thereto, to the University of Massachusetts. It will be maintained as a separate unit as "The William Procter Collection of Mount Desert Insects." In his will, Doctor Procter has specified that there be no additions made to this collection unless by specimens taken on Mount Desert Island, stating "My reason being that its great value is to show a biotic entity, and it has taken years of hard work to assemble same, though every hour one of pleasure."

Some of us were privileged to know Doctor Procter well and to appreciate his many splendid qualities. He was a most amazing combination of an outstanding man of business and

a keen entomologist. In one moment he might be discussing the purchase of the World whale oil supply for his Company, while at the next he would be in raptures over the capture of a microscopic beetle or other insect new to his collection. His knowledge of the habits and habitats of the Mount Desert insects was profound. The detailed record of the fauna of his beloved Island will long serve as his monument.

CHARLES P. ALEXANDER

The Tribal Position of Certain Genera of the Pyrgomorphinae (Orthoptera: Acrididae)

By JAMES A. G. REHN, Curator of Insects, The Academy of
Natural Sciences of Philadelphia

The author recently completed a monographic analysis of the acridoid subfamily Pyrgomorphinae as found in Australia, which is to appear as a section of a comprehensive study of the grasshoppers of that continent, prepared at the request of, and to be published by, the Scientific and Industrial Research Organization of that Commonwealth.

In the course of this work, and that on other sections of the Acridoidea, it has been found necessary to examine numerous non-Australian genera to evaluate the relationships and possible origin of genera occurring in Australia. In doing this cases of faulty associations made in the past are frequently encountered. These are due in some instances to previous authors having lacked actual material of relevant genera, or at least of a sufficient representation to furnish a proper background for generalizations, while in other cases errors of judgment or interpretation have been responsible for conclusions which now prove to be unwarranted or unsound.

The genera placed in the pyrgomorphid "section Poecilocerae," or, as I prefer to regard it, the tribe Poekilocerini (*Poekilocerus* being the original spelling of the key genus), by the last critical analyst of the subfamily as a whole, Ignacio Bolivar in 1909,¹

¹ Genera Insectorum, Acridiidae, Pyrgomorphinae.